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NOTES ON GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

Reptilia, Squamata, Amphisbaenidae, *Amphisbaena fuliginosa wiedi* Vanzolini, 1951: Distribution extension

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ABSTRACT: Recently, the predominantly Amazonian amphisbaenian species *Amphisbaena fuliginosa* was reported from the Cerrado biome, where its distribution is presently restricted to three localities in Goiás state and one in Minas Gerais state. Here we present new data on its distribution range in the Cerrado biome, a new record in the state of Minas Gerais and the southernmost record for the species, extending its southern distribution limit by 35 km.

The Cerrado biome is a world biodiversity 'hotspot', with high species richness and endemism (Myers *et al*. 2000; Klink and Machado 2005). It is a mosaic of landscapes, such as open savannas and dense vegetation (Oliveira-Filho and Ratter 2002). The main threat to Cerrado is its fragmentation, due especially to agriculture (Klink and Moreira 2002). In spite of human activity, it boasts a highly diverse animal community and some endemic groups, including squamata and plants (Colli *et al.* 2002; Nogueira *et al*. 2011; Werneck 2011).

Amphisbaenians are burrowing reptiles, poorly known ecologically because of their fossorial habits. There are over 200 species in 24 genera, usually distributed in four families (Kearney 2003; Gans 2005). Amphisbaenidae is the largest family, with about 180 species in 18 genera (Gans 2005), and 67 species found in Brazil (Bérnils and Costa 2012). From the 33 species known from the Cerrado, 20 are endemic (Nogueira *et al*. 2011).

Amphisbaena fuliginosa wiedi Vanzolini, 1951 is a wide-ranging species known mainly from Amazonian forest areas (Vanzolini 2002). It has a characteristic color pattern, a mosaic of predominantly black and white areas on both the dorsal and ventral sides. Recently, this species was reported from the Cerrado biome, in three localities in Goiás state (Serra da Mesa, Piracanjuba and Cumari) (Colli *et al*. 2002; Lemos and Facure 2007; Vanzolini 2002) and one in Minas Gerais (João Pinheiro) (Silveira 2007). Here we present new data on its distribution range in the Cerrado biome.

During fieldwork conducted in Araguari municipality, Minas Gerais state, we collected two specimens of *A. fuliginosa wiedi*. The first one (24.5 cm of total length) was found dead on March 19th 2009, around 17:00h, having been run over by an automobile on a dirt road in a semi-deciduous forest formation (18°33'27" S, 48°04'03" W), a typical Cerrado landscape. The second specimen (31.9 cm total length) (Figure 1) was found alive in a transitional area between Cerrado vegetation and an agricultural area (18°33'47" S, 48°02'56" W) on March 20th 2009, around 11:30h, while crossing a dirt road (IBAMA 12164) The specimens were deposited at the collection of the Departamento de Zoologia, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil (ZUFRJ 1783-84).

FIGURE 1. Female specimen of *Amphisbaena fuliginosa wiedi* (ZUFRJ 1784), photographed in its natural environment.

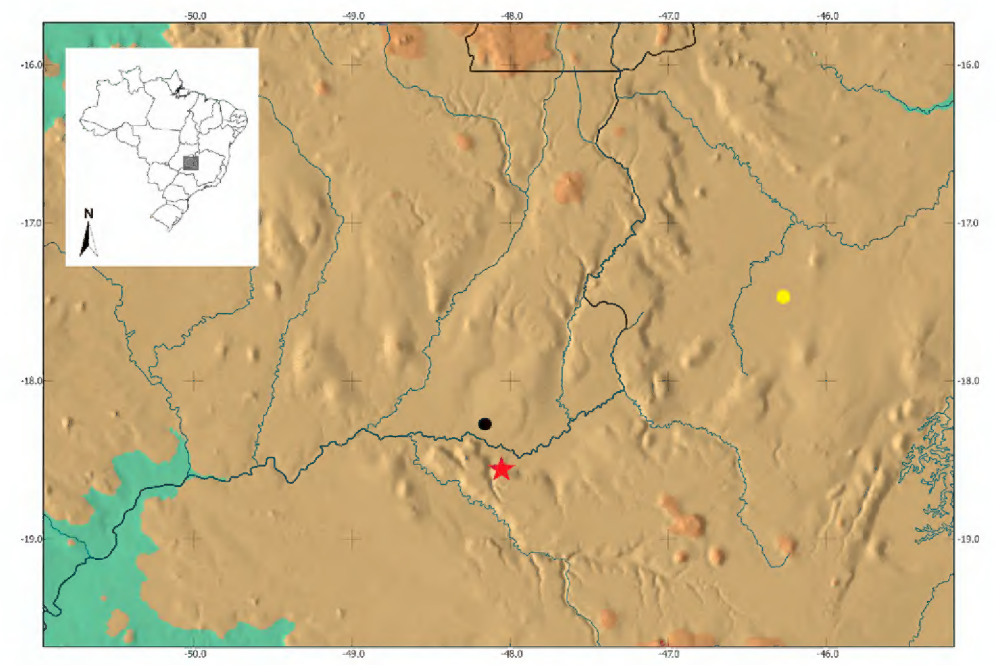

FIGURE 2. The two southernmost distribution records of *Amphisbaena fuliginosa* in Brazil. Red star – Araguari, Minas Gerais (new data, this study), Black circle – Cumari, Goiás (Lemos and Facure 2007; Vanzolini 2002), Yellow circle – João Pinheiro, Minas Gerais (Silveira 2007).

Until now Cumari was the southernmost locality reported for *Amphisbaena fuliginosa*. The data presented here extend its range about 35 km southwards, placing Araguari as the southernmost record for the species. This constitutes the second record of *A. fuliginosa wiedi* from Minas Gerais state, the fifth from the Cerrado biome and its southernmost record (Figure 2). Cerrado is one of the world's biodiversity hotspots, and the knowledge of fauna distribution along states where this biome occurs are essential for subsidize conservation actions.

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